

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02

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R 021342Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0765

INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 06659

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER BRITISH CON-
TACT; BRITISH VIEW OF OUTLOOK FOR SETTLEMENT

1. WHEN EMBOFF TOOK AMBASSADOR BOWDLER TO CALL ON ASSIS-
TANT UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE AT FCO, NORMAN ASPIN, ON
MAY 1, ASPIN WAS ASKED ABOUT PRESS REPORTS FROM KINGSTON
CLAIMING THAT BRITISH MAY SEEK NEW CONTACTS AT MINISTERI-
AL LEVEL WITH IAN SMITH. ASPIN SAID HMG HAD BEEN THINK-
ING ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY EVER SINCE SMITH TURNED DOWN
EARLIER BRITISH REQUEST TO SEND HIGH-RANKING CIVIL SER-
VANT TO SALISBURY FOR TALKS. BECAUSE OF INTEREST SHOWN
BY FONMINS OF TANZANIA, ZAMBIA AND BOTSWANA IN THEIR PRE-
CONFERENCE MEETING WITH BRITISH FONSEC CALLAGHAN AT KING-
STON, BRITISH GIVING FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO THE IDEA OF
ASKING SMITH TO RECEIVE A BRITISH MINISTER, BUT FCO DOES
NOT EXPECT AN EARLY DECISION. ASPIN COMMENTED THAT PRESS
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REPORTS OF THIS DEVELOPMENT WERE NOT HELPFUL. HE ALSO

SAID HE DID NOT FEEL THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD OBJECT TO SUCH A BRITISH INITIATIVE.

2. ON PROSPECTS FOR A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA, ASPIN SAID HE MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN HE WAS TWO WEEKS AGO. BRITISH ARE SEEING MORE EVIDENCE THAT SENIOR RHODESIAN OFFICIALS REALIZE SMITH REGIME CANNOT HOLD OUT, THERE IS GROWING REALIZATION IN RHODESIA THAT MOZAMBIQUE WILL APPLY SANCTIONS AFTER INDEPENDENCE AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE KEEPING UP THE PRESSURE ON SMITH BECAUSE A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT IS THE KEY POINT OF THEIR DETENTE POLICY.

3. COMMENT: IF EVENTS SUSTAIN CURRENT BRITISH OPTIMISM, DECISION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE IN FAVOR OF ASKING SMITH TO RECEIVE BRITISH MINISTERIAL EMISSARY. MAIN CONTRIBUTION HE MIGHT MAKE WOULD BE POSSIBLY TO ADD FURTHER WEIGHT TO ARGUMENTS THAT SMITH REGIME CANNOT HOLD OUT LONG IN VIEW CONTINUING SOUTH AFRICAN PRESSURES AND CLOSING OF MOZAMBIQUE PORTS TO RHODESIA. HE COULD ALSO: A) AGAIN TELL SMITH THAT AS SOON AS ANC AND SMITH CAN AGREE ON MODALITIES FOR PROCEEDING TO MAJORITY RULE, BRITISH WOULD CARRY OUT NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE MEASURES TO GRANT LEGITIMATE INDEPENDENCE; B) OFFER BRITISH HELP IN RESETTLING WHITE RHODESIANS WHO MIGHT WISH TO LEAVE; C) OFFER TO ASSIST IN SPEEDY RETURN TO NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS.

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